THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The maintenance of law and order and control of crime on Railway premises including Railway stations and running trains is the responsibility of the State Government concerned. However, RPF co-ordinates with the GRP for ensuring better security to the Railway passengers and their belongings. The following steps have been taken by RPF for improving the passenger safety:

(1) Co-ordination meetings are being held between Railway managers, RPF officers and State Police Officers at the Zonal and Divisional level. Meeting is also being held at the level of Railway Board.

(2) RPF Officers are holding regular co-ordination meetings with their counter-parts on the GRP and Civil Police.

(3) Sharing of Special Intelligence and Crime Intelligence between RPF and GRP is being done at all levels.

(4) Joint Strategies for dealing with anti-social elements operating on Railways have been chalked out by the GRP and RPF.

(5) RPF Sniffer dogs, wherever available, are being deployed at Railway platforms, yards etc. to sniff out explosive substances. RPF men are being trained in the identification and detection of explosive devices.

Rail Accidents

492. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of Rail accidents in the country is increasing, day by day;

(b) if so, whether Government have gone deep into the cause responsible for these accidents, particularly during the last two years;

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken, till date, to minimise these accidents;

(d) whether it is a fact that the number of passengers travelling by trains is decreasing; and

(e) if so, what new plans Government propose to introduce to attract more people to travel by trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir. The number of consequential train accidents in 1960-61 was 2131. It reached a level of 381 in 1996-97 and during 1998-99 it was 397.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A statement is enclosed (*See* below).

(d) No, Sir. There has been an average increase of 2.9% from 1971-72 to 1998-99.

(e) Following measures proposed/initiated to attract passengers by trains:

1. Carrying out Waiting list analysis on day to day basis and attaching of additional coaches on important trains after assessment of demand.
2. Running of Special trains during the peak period to clear additional passengers.
3. Extending the Tatkal Scheme for reservation on important trains.
4. Extending the facility of customer friendly measures like Tele booking and handling of complaints through computers and National enquiry system.

Statement

Brief steps taken to prevent accidents

1. The work of track circuiting has been accelerated on the trunk routes and other important main lines.
2. Modification of the signaling circuitry is being carried out to minimize chances of human errors in causing accidents.
3. Auxiliary warning system for giving advance warning about 'signal at danger' to the driver of the running train has been commissioned on Mumbai suburban sections.
4. Railway Board has cleared a pilot project of AWS for Tughlaqabad-Mathura section of Central railway on a trial basis.
5. Walkie-Talkie sets have been supplied to Drivers and Guards of all Passenger carrying trains. The same is presently being supplied to Drivers and Guards of goods trains also and the same is likely to be completed by 31st March, 2000.
6. There has been progressive increase in use of Tie Tamping and ballast cleaning machines for track maintenance.
7. For monitoring track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and portable accelerometer are being progressively used.
8. For detecting rail fractures and weld failure 96 more double rail Ultra Sonic Flaw Detectors are being procured.
9. Maintenance facilities for coaches and wagons have been modernised and upgraded at many depots.
10. To prevent cases of cold breakage of axles, ROH Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the axles.

11. Whistle boards/speed breakers and road signs have been provided at unmanned level crossings and visibility for drivers has been improved.

12. Audio-visual publicity campaigns to educate road users on how to make a safe crossing are conducted.

13. Steps have been taken to prevent inflammable and explosive materials from being carried in passenger trains.

14. Periodic Safety Audit of different divisions by inter-disciplinary teams from zonal headquarters has been introduced.

15. Training facilities for drivers, guards and staff connected with train operation have been modernized including use of simulators for training of drivers.

16. Refresher courses are regularly organized at specified intervals.

17. Performance of the staff connected with train operations is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are sent for crash training.

18. Periodical safety drives are conducted to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff.

Compensation to the victims of Gaisal Rail accident

493. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons killed in the Rail accident at Gaisal;

(b) how many of them were army personnel;

(c) whether the families of all such persons have been provided with compensation;

(d) if so, the amount paid as compensation; and

(e) if not, how many of them are yet to be paid and by when they would be paid compensation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The number of persons killed at Gaisal accident is 287.

(b) So far 55 killed persons have been identified as army personnel.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Nil.

(e) A total of 283 cases have been filed claims in Railway Claims Tribunal, Calcutta so far. Compensation will be paid as per award of the Tribunal.